

## Claims

1. A method of routing data directed to a mobile node (6) in a communications system, comprising the steps of:
  - 5 maintaining reachability information for the mobile node; and receiving data directed to the mobile node; characterised by setting a destination (18, 19a - n) to which the received data is to be sent when the reachability information indicates that the mobile node is unreachable.
- 10 2. A method according to claim 1, wherein the data destination comprises a proxy node (18).
- 15 3. A method according to claim 2, further comprising instructing the proxy node to send received data to the mobile node when the reachability information indicates that the mobile node has become reachable.
4. A method according to any preceding claim, comprising setting the data destination in accordance with a user preference.
- 20 5. A method according to claim 4, wherein the user preference specifies the conditions in which the user specified destination is to be used.
6. A method according to any preceding claim, wherein the reachability information comprises at least one destination address.
- 25 7. A method according to claim 11, further comprising storing the data at said alternative destination until the mobile host becomes available.
8. A method according to any preceding claim, wherein the communications system comprises an Internet Protocol (IP) based system.

9. A method according to claim 7, wherein the reachability information is maintained by a home agent router (7).
10. A method according to claim 7 or 8, wherein the destination address is a care-of address for the mobile node.
  - 5
11. A mobile communications system comprising:
  - a mobile node (6);
  - means for maintaining reachability information for the mobile node; and
  - 10 means for receiving messages directed to the mobile node; characterised by a service controller (13) configured to set a destination for a message directed to the mobile node when the reachability information indicates that the mobile node is unreachable.
- 15 12. A method of routing data directed to a mobile host (6) which is away from its home network (1), comprising the steps of:
  - maintaining a record of locations through which the data can be routed to the mobile host, and in the event that the data cannot be routed to the mobile host through any of the locations specified in the record, then routing the data to an alternative destination (18, 19a – n) from which it is available for subsequent retrieval to the mobile host.
  - 20
13. A method according to claim 12, further comprising storing the data at said alternative destination until the mobile host becomes available.
  - 25
14. A mobile communications system comprising:
  - a mobile host (6) movable between its home network (1) and a plurality of connected communications networks (2, 3);
  - a router (7) configured to route data intended for the mobile host to a location (10, 11) through which the data can be sent to the mobile host, when the mobile host is away from its home network; and

a service controller (13) configured to intervene so as to send the data to an alternative location (18, 19a - n), when the data cannot be sent to the mobile host.

- 5 14. A mobile communications system comprising:  
a mobile node (6); and  
means (7) for receiving a message directed to the mobile node; characterised by  
means (13) for controlling the destination to which the message is to be sent in  
accordance with a user preference.

10

15. A system according to claim 14, further comprising means for  
maintaining reachability information for the mobile node, wherein the  
controlling means is operative to set a user defined destination for the message  
when the reachability information indicates that the node is unreachable.

15

16. A method of routing data directed to a mobile node (6) in a  
communications system, comprising the steps of:  
receiving data directed to the mobile node; and  
setting the destination to which the data is to be sent in accordance with a user  
20 preference.

17. A mobile communications system substantially as hereinbefore described  
with reference to the accompanying drawings.
- 25 18. A method of routing data directed to a mobile node in a communications  
system, substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the  
accompanying drawings.